

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
USSN 10/030,043
Attorney Docket Q67954
March 17, 2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-67. (Canceled)

68. (New) A protective device for protecting an interface means of a read and/or write head of a read and/or write unit when the read and/or write unit is not in use, the read and/or write unit comprising a receiving area for receiving a data carrier, the read and/or write head being located in or adjacent the receiving area for interfacing with the data carrier for reading from and/or writing to the data carrier, the protective device comprising:

a carrier means for locating in the receiving area of the read and/or write unit, and

a protecting means carried on the carrier means for protecting the interface means of the read and/or write head against dirt and dust, the protecting means being of area and being located on the carrier means for engaging and embracing the interface means when the read and/or write head is in the inoperative position with the read and/or write unit deactivated so that the interface means nests in the protecting means for protecting the interface means from dirt and dust when the read and/or write unit is not in use.

69. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 68 in which the area of the protecting means offered up to the interface means is at least of area similar to the area of the interface means.

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70. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 68 in which the area of the protecting means offered up to the interface means is greater than the area of the interface means.

71. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 68 in which the protecting means is resilient.

72. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 68 in which the protecting means comprises a plurality of fibres extending from the carrier means for engaging the interface means.

73. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 72 in which the fibres of the protecting means are flexible.

74. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 72 in which the fibres of the protecting means are provided in the form of a brush.

75. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 72 in which the fibres of the protecting means extend from a base member mounted on the carrier means.

76. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 75 in which a resilient mounting means is provided for resiliently mounting the base member of the protecting means to the carrier means.

77. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 72 in which the carrier means defines a central axis for in use coinciding with a rotational axis of a data carrier in the receiving area, and the carrier means defines a carrier plane, and the fibres of the protecting means extend from the carrier means at an angle to the carrier plane of less than 90°.

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78. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 77 in which the fibres of the protecting means extend from the carrier means in a direction circumferentially relative to the central axis defined by the carrier means.

79. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 77 in which the protecting means extends circumferentially completely around the central axis defined by the carrier means, and is spaced apart from the central axis defined by the carrier means.

80. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 68 in which the protecting means protects the interface means of the read and/or write head from shock.

81. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 68 in which an indicating means is provided on the carrier means for indicating the direction in which the carrier means is to be inserted in the receiving area of the read and/or write unit, and for facilitating alignment of the protecting means with the interface means of the read and/or write head.

82. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 68 in which the protecting means is located on the carrier means for cleaning the interface means as the carrier means is being inserted in the receiving area.

83. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 68 in which the protecting means is located on the carrier means for cleaning the interface means when the read and/or write head is activated for reading or writing data, and when the read and/or write head is being initially moved for identifying data.

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84. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 68 in which the protecting means is for protecting an interface means provided by a lens of a read and/or write optical head, the protecting means being of area for engaging and embracing the lens.

85. (New) A protective device as claimed in Claim 68 in which the carrier means is provided for engaging in a disc receiving area of a disc drive read and/or write unit, and the carrier means is provided by a carrier disc.

86. (New) A method for protecting an interface means of a read and/or write head of a read and/or write unit when the read and/or write unit is not in use, the read and/or write unit comprising a receiving area for receiving a data carrier, the read and/or write head being located in or adjacent the receiving area for interfacing with the data carrier for reading from and/or writing to the data carrier, the method comprising the steps of inserting a carrier means having a protecting means carried thereon into the receiving area of the read and/or write unit, the protecting means being of area and being located on the carrier means for engaging and embracing the interface means when the read and/or write head is in the inoperative position with the read and/or write unit deactivated so that the interface means nests in the protecting means for protecting the interface means from dust and dirt when the read and/or write unit is not in use.

87. (New) A method as claimed in Claim 86 further comprising the step of cleaning the interface means of the read and/or write head with the protecting means as the carrier means is being inserted into the receiving area.

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88. (New) A method as claimed in Claim 86 further comprising the step of cleaning the interface means of the read and/or write head with the protecting means when the read and/or write unit is activated and the read and/or write head is operated to read or write data.
